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**The amazing true story of Sichan Siv who escaped the killing fields of Cambodia to become an important figure in Washington.**

# **GOLDEN BONES**

**An Extraordinary Journey from Hell in Cambodia  
to a New Life in America**

**By Sichan Siv**

**Former U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations**

**“The uplifting saga of a man who escaped genocidal Cambodia, became a U.S. citizen, then served in the Bush I and II administrations. Moving and frequently educational.”** —*Kirkus Reviews*

**“The story is always compelling, and Siv moves the narrative forward by raw force of will.”**  
—*Publishers Weekly*

Sichan Siv’s unbelievable journey from certain death halfway around the world in the killing fields of Cambodia to the corridors of power of Washington, D.C. is the basis for the new book, **GOLDEN BONES: An Extraordinary Journey from Hell in Cambodia to a New Life in America** (Harper/HarperCollins Publishers, July 1, 2008)—a classic American immigrant success story. Siv’s life offers a searing glimpse into the soul of a man who endured the worst horrors humanity can face and how he was remarkably able to transcend these into an inspirational testament to the triumph of the human spirit in the face of true evil.

In 1975, as the U.S. presence in Vietnam ended, in neighboring Cambodia the Khmer Rouge came to power. They began a vicious genocide to return Cambodia to an agrarian society. They imprisoned, enslaved, and murdered anybody who disagreed with their “revolution,” resulting in the harrowing “killing fields”—rice paddies where the harvest yielded nothing but human bones. Sichan Siv, a young man at the time and a target since he graduated from university, was told by his mother to run and “never give up hope!” Removing his glasses (since only intellectuals wore them), he set out to bicycle across Cambodia. Captured and put to work in slave labor camps, Siv knew it was only a matter of time before he would be worked to death—or killed. With a daring escape from a logging truck and a desperate run for freedom through the jungle, including falling into a dreaded pungi pit, Siv finally came upon a colorfully dressed farmer in Thailand.

**GOLDEN BONES** is also an exciting survivor story. While Siv loses family members and his country to the communists, his spirit is never broken. After spending months teaching English in a refugee camp in Thailand while regaining his strength, eventually he was allowed entry into the United States.

Upon his arrival in America, Siv kept striving. Working variously as an apple picker in Connecticut (he saw his first Fourth of July parade in Vermont), and a cab driver in New York, he became a graduate student at Columbia University. During this time he befriended Dith Pran—subject of *The Killing Fields*.

Siv's hard work and perseverance were noticed while volunteering on the campaign of George Bush in 1988, and he was offered a job in the White House as Deputy Assistant to the President for Public Liaison, and as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia. In 1992, Siv returned with some trepidation to Cambodia as a senior representative of the U.S. government. It was an emotionally overwhelming visit that he recounts in the book.

In October 2001, he was nominated by President George W. Bush and became a United States Ambassador to the United Nations.

Sichan Siv has come a long way. A proud American, he is now in demand as a speaker at universities and businesses around the country, where his incredible life saga never fails to get an ovation.

**GOLDEN BONES** is not only a story for the 13 million Asian-Americans who now make up the fastest-growing ethnic minority in the United States, but also for anyone who has ever had to find triumph over adversity.

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Sichan Siv** was nominated by President George W. Bush in October 2001 and unanimously confirmed by the Senate as a United States Ambassador to the United Nations. In the administration of the 41<sup>st</sup> president, George Bush, Ambassador Siv served as Deputy Assistant to the President for Public Liaison and Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for South Asia.

Ambassador Siv holds a Master of International Affairs from Columbia University. He was born in Cambodia and resettled as a refugee in Wallingford, CT. He is married to the former Martha Pattillo of Pampa, Texas. They spend their time in San Antonio, New York, and beyond.

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